



# **John Reich Journal**

**Vol. 1**

**No.1**



The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States silver coins minted before 1838, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

The John Reich Journal is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and/or relating to early United States silver coins to the editor. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die varieties, die states of published die varieties, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc. Inquiries about specific varieties will be directed to one of the experts in that series.

The Editor

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Cover Photo. 1796 Dime JR-1. An early die state without the cud die break at star 1. See page 4.

Picture courtesy of Stack's.



# John Reich Journal

Official publication of the  
JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY

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## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the first issue of the **John Reich Journal** ("Journal"). The idea for the **John Reich Collectors Society** ("JRCS") and the **Journal** goes back about fifteen years. Several members of the 'Bust Half Nut Club' who had expanded their interests beyond collecting half dollar die varieties came up with the name JRCS. The original membership requirement was that a collector must collect at least three different silver denominations of the Capped Bust design. The list of people sharing information and ideas, trading, buying and selling varieties never exceeded ten. There was no real effort to expand or formally organize. Several years back, some early dollar die variety collectors joined together for a short time and published a brief newsletter called "the Lettered Edge". Unfortunately, it did not last. The five co-authors of the book, Early United States Dimes, 1796-1837, while doing their research, met many other collectors and dealers who kept inquiring about the possibility of an organization that would encompass all early U.S. silver and publish some of the ongoing research and other new information. The five co-authors formed a non-profit organization and contributed \$200 each to get it going and publish the first newsletter. To make it a success and to keep the organization solvent JRCS is going to need at least 125 members. If you know of anyone interested in early U.S. silver who did not receive an application blank or this issue of the **Journal** please have them contact us, or forward their name to us.

When the decision was made to put the first **Journal** together the call went out for articles. Eight authors answered the summons. The only denomination without an article is quarters, probably the series least collected by die variety. Other than that there should be something of interest for everyone. During the next year we plan to publish at least one more issue, probably about July 1st. How often the **John Reich Journal** is published is going to depend on the amount of material received. If there are any members of JRCS who feel inclined to write, send along anything you have to say about early U.S. silver. The **Journal** will be a better publication if we can maintain the diversity.



You will note the lack of advertising in this issue. This is for two reasons. One reason is, we did not solicit any. The second reason is because the JRCS officers have yet to establish a policy or a price structure. If any dealers are interested in advertising in the **Journal**, please drop us a line. Most likely advertising will be limited to ads offering to buy, sell or trade early U.S. silver. One suggestion is to have free classified ads for members, with a three or four line limit.

On the inside back cover is an announcement for the American Numismatic Society 1986 'Conference on American Coinage'. The 1984 conference on copper coinage and the 1985 conference on pre-National currency was well received and well attended. This year's conference will be on U.S. silver coinage 1792 through 1891, I would recommend it, if you can attend. It will be a great opportunity to listen to, meet with, and talk to other numismatists with similar interests. The cost is very minimal and includes the book that will be published on the papers delivered at the conference.

I received a short note from a **SERIOUS** John Reich collector, i.e. he only collects coins and medals from dies designed or executed by John Reich. After looking at the collecting categories listed on the JRCS application form, he noted that only categories "f", "h" and "k" are Reich pieces. And we had left out: half cents, large cents, the 1808 quarter eagle, 1807-13 half eagles, Reich's European and American medals, etc. This was not an oversight, we just decided to use the name because we liked the sound of it and we did not like Early American Silvers nor could we come up with anything else. I just hope our selection of the name **John Reich Collectors Society** and **John Reich Journal** doesn't get us into any more trouble, or mislead any other early U.S. silver collectors.

In closing, I would like to say, I am looking forward to putting together the next issue of the **Journal**. I believe there are enough people interested in seeing this enterprise succeed and that there is a need for everyone to band together to promote the collecting of early U.S. silver by date, by die varieties and by type.

David J. Davis



## THE FIRST DIME

For many years the 1796 JR-1 dime has generally been identified in auction catalogues as the "variety with the usual die lump near the first star." According to the recently published Early United States Dimes, 1796-1837 ("Dime Book"), this variety is the most common of all 1796 dimes. Numismatic writers generally agree that dimes of this variety were the first dimes struck by the Mint. See the discussion of 1796 dimes in Die Varieties of Early United States Coins by Robert P. Hilt, II and the Dime Book. However, Walter Breen, in his Encyclopedia of United States and Colonial Proof Coins, 1722-1977 ("Breen's Proofs") indicates that the first dimes struck at the Mint were the variety with the dot before the L, outer berries between T and E in UNITED and under the first T in STATES. Breen called this dot before the L variety Breen 1-A, Clapp 3; it is designated as 1796 JR-6 in the Dime Book. Moreover, Breen's Proofs does not identify any Breen 1796 5-D dime (which is the same as JR-1) as a proof.

The Dime Book authors estimate that 1796 JR-1 dimes constitute about 40-45% of all 1796 dimes existing today. This percentage is in line with the 14,520 dimes delivered on January 18, 1796 with Warrant #54, which is 44.8% of the estimated total issuance of 32,379 dimes bearing the date 1796, including 10,244 dimes dated 1796 delivered in February and March, 1797. Based on examination of scores of 1796 dimes in auctions and offered by dealers, the Dime Book authors concluded that 1796 JR-1 dimes are Rarity 3, or in other words there are between 201 and 500 specimens of this variety in all conditions exist today. This indicates a survival rate of between 1.38% and 3.44%, which neatly brackets the generally accepted survival rate of 2% to 2.5% for early United States silver coins. Furthermore, dimes with the telltale die break at the first star appeared in quantities sufficient to confirm the 40-45% frequency of appearance statement. 1796 JR-6, however, appears about 30% of the time, which is in line with the 10,244 dimes believed to have been dated 1796 and delivered in 1797.

Although the Dime Book authors had heard reports of the existence of a 1796 JR-1 dime without the cud die break at the first star, none of the authors had actually seen such a



specimen among the many 1796 dimes examined by them. The positions of the key stars (S1, S8, S9, and S15) are given as "?UBU", because, as noted in the paragraph describing defects,

"All specimens seen have die cud at S1 on obverse which increases in size until S1 obliterated."

Stack's auction of the Jimmy Hayes Collection of United States Coins on October 22, 1985 provided the answer to the question of the position of the first star. Lot 16 in this auction sale was a gem proof or presentation piece 1796 JR-1 dime **without the cud die break at the first star!** An enlarged photograph of the obverse of this coin appears on the cover of this issue of the JRCS Journal. Stack's described the coin as follows:

"16 1796 Reich 1. Gem Brilliant Proof. Undoubtedly struck for presentation. Deep mirror surface, fully struck stars and devices. Superb sea-green, golden and iridescent toning. Really a coin of indescribable beauty. Not only is this coin the **Finest Known** of the variety, but it is the only example known to the authors of the new book on die varieties 1796-1837, without the diebreak on the first star. This coin will undoubtedly set a new record for a 1796 dime! (SEE COLOR PLATE)

"Ex Empire collection (Stack's), lot 728, November 1957."

Examination of this remarkable coin at an auction lot viewing disclosed that the outer point of the first star pointed to the upper part of a denticle so that the description of 1796 Obverse 1 in the Dime Book should be corrected to indicate that the key star positions are "UUBU." In addition, the incipient die cud break is revealed by faint hair line cracks from the rim to the lowest point of S1 and from the upper left point of S1 to the rim. A small piece of metal the shape of these hair line cracks fell out of the die very early in its use, giving rise to the ubiquitous die cud that appears on all other known 1796 JR-1 dimes. To



generalize from the specific, and assuming that there are no other 1796 JR-1 dimes without the obverse cud in existence, one can logically conclude that the metal chip fell out in the first few striking with the obverse die.

As noted in the Dime Book, special care was taken by the Mint in striking the 1796 dimes because they were the first coins struck in a decimal monetary system that were exactly one-tenth of the country's basic monetary unit, in this case the United States dollar. The British florin, or two shilling piece, which was one-tenth of a pound, did not make its appearance until 1849; the British relied upon the halfcrown (one-eighth of a pound) and shillings and six pence instead. Well struck specimens of 1796 dimes were given as souvenirs to foreign dignitaries who toured the Mint and to high government officials. The novelty of the dime appealed to such distinguished persons. There can be no question that the Hayes 1796 dime was coined to be a presentation piece. A polished planchet (which, as Breen states, was not unusual in 1796 coinage) was used, and the coin struck twice or possibly three times in order to emphasize the details of the design. The multiple striking clearly establishes that it is a proof or presentation piece. It is perfectly centered, the stars and denticles are fully and sharply struck, and the devices are well detailed.

Since the Hayes 1796 dime was unquestionably an early strike proof or presentation piece, it is not unreasonable to speculate that it might well have been one of the first dimes, if not the first dime, struck by the Mint. Its variety was the first dime variety minted, and by chance the obverse die developed the cud at the first star early in its service. The continued use of the broken die is a strong basis for the inference that no other dies were available. It is well known that Robert Scot, the Chief Engraver at the Mint in 1796 and the designer of both the flowing hair obverse used on dimes from 1796 to 1807 and the small eagle reverse used in 1796 and 1797, was a notoriously slow worker. No other prooflike dime dated 1796 in equal condition has been uncovered. The Empire-Hayes coin is clearly superior to the prooflike specimen listed as Lot 421 in the World's Greatest Collection Sale (F.C.C. Boyd collection) ("WGC") by Numismatic Galleries (A. Kreisberg and A. Kosoff) in January, 1945. One might speculate that perhaps the newly appointed



Director of the Mint, Elias Boudinot, had this coin struck for his patron, President George Washington, or for himself as a memento of his service at the Mint. It is doubtful that such a significant coin would have been minted for Chief Coiner Henry Voight or the Mint's Jack of all trades, Adam Eckfeldt. Robert Scot, might also have been the original recipient of the Hayes 1796 JR-1 dime.

Unfortunately, the provenance of the Hayes coin cannot be established back to the date of its minting. As noted in the Hayes sale catalogue description, the same 1796 JR-1 dime was offered by Stack's as Lot 728 in the Empire Collection Sale on November 12, 13 and 14, 1957. The coin had been consigned to Stack's as part of the collection of Charles A. Cass, a member of a prominent New York family, which assembled the so-called "Empire" collection. In the Empire sale catalogue, the coin was described as follows:

"728 1796. First year of issue. Variety without usual die lump near first star. A Perfectly centered sharp strike with full denticles on both obverse and reverse. Each star fully struck. No doubt this coin was a presentation specimen. A perfect Proof, delicately toned in golds and blues. A prize to own! Worthy of a \$400.00 bid. Rare so choice."

Significantly, Empire Lot 728 is not mentioned as a proof in Breen's Proofs, although on p. 310 of Breen's Proofs under the abbreviation reference "Cass" appears the notation "A" (for auction) and "(Cass, Charles A.) Coll., as 'Empire' sale, S 11/12/1957". The photograph of the coin in the Empire catalogue is not sufficiently clear to identify the variety with certainty. Query, whether Breen overlooked Empire Lot 728, or felt that it was not a proof or presentation piece, or assumed that Stack's were incorrect in stating that the dime was of the variety "without the usual die lump near the first star"? some of the comments in Breen's Proofs on 1796 coinage are informative. The introductory paragraph states:

"A midwest dealer has attempted to assemble a so-called 'proof set' of 1796. The effort yielded



a beautiful group of coins, though most of them would not have qualified at the presentation-piece level. What confuses many collectors and dealers is that many silver coins of 1796 exist on brilliantly polished blanks. Some of these may have been presentation pieces. The information available for this date is more confusing than for any other coinage."

In describing the 1796 dimes which he considered "qualified" as a proof or presentation piece, Breen states:

"The presentation pieces are from perfect dies, without cracks. A couple of those in WGC (F.C.C. Boyd collection) had earmarks of light double striking, suggesting that they indeed might have been deliberately given two blows apiece from the dies to bring up the design. If so any such coins would qualify as proofs, given the other characteristics (surfaces and vividness of impression). Occasion for the presentation was presumably the beginning of coinage. A few other varieties have been seen with similar characteristics, but their status is still uncertain." (Emphasis supplied).

Although it is difficult to translate Kosoff's rather vague and disorganized descriptions of the twelve 1796 dime lots in the WGC catalogue into John Reich varieties, the effort must be made to determine whether WGC included a "couple" of 1796 dimes which had the "earmarks" of double striking. First, one must review these lots to determine to which variety each of the listed 1796 dimes should be attributed. These are:

<u>WGC</u> <u>Lot #</u>	<u>Condition</u>	<u>JR #</u> <u>Var.</u>	<u>Breen #</u> <u>Obv/Rev</u>
417	Uncirculated, with lustrous surface	4	2-B
418	Extremely fine	4	2-B
419	Uncirculated	1	5-D
420	Very fine. Nice lustre	1	5-D



421	Uncirculated gem.		
	Superb with proof lustre	6	1-A
422	Very fine	6	1-A
423	Fine to very fine	6	1-A
424	Very fine	6	1-A
425	Very good	2	4-C
426	Fine	1	5-D
427	Fine	1	5-D
428	Only about good	4	2-B

Despite the use of the word "couple" in Breen's Proofs, only one 1796 JR-6 dime was listed in the WGC catalogue as being prooflike. Doubling of stars, date numerals, or legend letters were noted in some instances, but no coin was stated to be fully double struck. The other three 1796 JR-6 dimes were only in fine condition, and there was no indication that the surfaces were prooflike. The other two mint state dimes were a JR-4 (Lot 417) and a JR-1 (Lot 419). It is interesting to note that of the twelve 1796 dimes listed in the WGC catalogue: there were four specimens of JR-1, one specimen of JR-2, three specimens of JR-4, and four specimens of Jr-6 or Breen 1-A. This population is in line with the Dime Book estimates of rarity.

Empire Lot 728 was purchased for \$540 by a California collector bidding under the initials M.O. (M. Ostheimer?). Ostheimers's collection was sold through Lester Merkin, but the gem proof 1796 JR-1 dime without the cud break at the first star apparently did not appera in any of Merkin's auction sales. Instead, sometime during the 1970's it was acquired by Dr. Ketterman, a Kansas City collector, who in turn sold it to Jimmy Hayes in 1982. At the auction of the Jimmy Hayes collection, Lot 16 opened at \$35,000 based on a mail bid, quickly rose to the highest mail bid of \$39,000, which was then topped. The Hayes Lot 16 dime was purchased for \$40,000 by a New York collector who specializes in United States coins dated 1796. Adding the 10% buyer's fee to the \$40,000 winning floor bid, this gem coin cost the buyer \$44,000, an increase of \$43,460 or about 17% compounded annually since the coin was sold on November 13, 1957.

Allen F. Lovejoy



# VARIETIES OF EARLY UNITED STATES SILVER COINS

Here are two tables showing the number of varieties of each denomination of silver coins. One shows the total number of varieties of each denomination struck each year. The other table shows the total number of varieties of each type, the estimated number of coins minted, and the years in which they were struck. Proof only and restrikes are not included, and a list of them is shown on one of the tables. Additions, deductions, and questions are welcomed. Write to: Jules Reiver, 1802 Forrest Road, Wilmington, DE 19810 - Phone 302 475 5636

## VARIETIES OF SILVER COINS FOR EACH YEAR

DATE	HALF DIME	DIME	FLOWING HAIR		DOLLAR	TOTAL
			QUARTER	HALF DOLLAR		
1794	4			10	1	15
1795	10			32	17	59
Total	14			42	18	74

DRAPED BUST - SMALL EAGLE REVERSE						
1795					2	2
1796	2	6	2	2	6	18
1797	4	2		2	3	11
1798					2	2
Total	6	8	2	4	13	33

DRAPED BUST - HERALDIC EAGLE REVERSE						
1798		4			31	35
1799					22	22
1800	3	2			16	21
1801	2	2		2	4	10
1802	1	4		1	7	13
1803	3	4		4	5	16
1804		2	2			4
1805	1	2	5	14		22
1806			10	27		37
1807		1	2	10		13
TOTAL	10	21	19	58	85	193



# TURBAN HEAD (CAPPED BUST)

DATE	HALF DIME	DIME	QUARTER	HALF DOLLAR	DOLLAR	TOTAL
1807				4		4
1808				10		10
1809		1		15		16
1810				10		10
1811		1		13		14
1812				10		10
1813				10		10
1814		5		9		14
1815				1		1
1816						0
1817				13		13
1818			10	15		25
1819			4	15		19
1820		13	5	8		26
1821		10	5	7		22
1822		1	2	15		18
1823		3	1	13		17
1824		2	1	17		20
1825		5	3	18		26
1826				20		20
1827		13		49		62
1828		2	4	23		29
1829	16	12		20		48
1830	13	8		23		44
1831	7	7	7	20		41
1832	14	7	2	23		46
1833	9	10	2	15		36
1834	5	7	5	21		38
1835	11	9	8	10		38
1836	7	3	4	23		37
1837	5	4	5			14
1838			1			1
TOTAL	87	122	70	450		729
GRAND TOTAL	117	151	91	554	116	1029



# VARIETIES AND MINTAGES

	HALF DIME	DIME	QUARTER
FLOWING HAIR	86,000 14 var 1794-5	0	0
DRAPED BUST	55,000	47,000	6000
SMALL EAGLE	6 var	8 var	2 var
REVERSE	1796-7	1796-7	1796
DRAPED BUST	125,000	423,000	555,000
HERALDIC EAGLE	10 var	21 var	19 var
REVERSE	1800-5	1798-1807	1804-7
TURBAN HEAD	14,464,000	12,394,000	5,962,000
(CAPPED BUST)	87 var 1829-37	122 var 1809-37	70 var 1815-38
TOTAL	14,730,000 117 var 1794-1837	12,864,000 151 var 1796-1837	6,523,000 91 var 1796-1838

Note - Proof Only or Restrikes not included:

1827 Quarter B1                      1801 Dollar B5  
 1827 Quarter B2                      1802 Dollar B8  
 1833, 1834, and 1835 Half Dollar Restrikes

Jules Reiver, 1802 Forrest Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810



# OF EARLY U. S. SILVER

HALF DOLLAR	DOLLAR	TOTAL
323,000	162,000	571,000
42 var	18 var	74 var
1794-5	1794-5	1794-5
4,000	145,000	257,000
4 var	13 var	33 var
1796-7	1795-8	1795-8
1,601,000	1,154,000	3,858,000
58 var	85 var	193 var
1801-7	1798-1803	1798-1807
93,031,000		125,851,000
450 var	0	729 var
1807-36		1807-38
94,959,000	1,461,000	130,537,000
554 var	116 var	1029 var
1794-1836	1794-1803	1794-1838

1803 Dollar B7  
 1804 Dollar B1  
 1804 Dollar B2

November 4, 1985



**SOME THOUGHTS ON THE COLLECTING  
OF CAPPED BUST HALF DOLLARS  
1807 - 1836**

For those whose collecting and numismatic interests are not limited to 20th Century issues consideration should be given to assembling a collection of an obsolete series of U.S. Coins. **Capped Bust Half Dollars** provide just the right mix of challenge and affordability.

Capped bust halves were issued during 29 of the 30 years from 1807 through 1836. (None were issued bearing the date 1816. Flowing Hair and Draped Bust Halves were issued from 1794 - 1807. This discussion deals only with the Capped Bust or "Turban Head" series.) There are no extreme rarities and only one date, the 1815 (over 2), had a truly low mintage. The cost of assembling a complete date set, excluding the 1815/2, in fine condition is about \$30 to \$40 per coin. The dates prior to 1824 may be a bit more; those after 1823 are often a bit less. The 1815/2 is selling for \$900.00 or so in fine condition.

The cost and likelihood of completing a date set of Bust Halves compares favorably with most of the other U.S. series, including some 20th Century issues, e.g., Buffalo Nickels, Standing Liberty Quarters, Walking Liberty Halves or Peace Dollars. High priced rarities frequent almost every other 19th Century series of 19th Century series of U.S. coins. The average and advanced collector faces frustration (and bankruptcy!) if he or she attempts to complete a set of half cents, large cents, two or three cent pieces, shield nickels or bust half dimes, dimes or quarters. Even the Seated Liberty issues and Barber coinages are sprinkled with costly rarities.

Another plus for the Bust Half collector is the opportunity to augment a date collection by adding the so-called Red Book varieties. Large and small stars, dates and letters abound. So do the popular "overdates". Most such Red Book varieties - there were 53 at last count - are available at the same price or at only a small premium over the non-varietal issues. There are a few exceptions, however. One is the classic rarity, 1817/4. Only a few are known and, were one to become available, a low grade coin



would probably fetch \$8-10,000. So forget this one, unless you are also in the market for 1894-S dimes and the like.

Many (most?) dealers are not familiar with the relative scarcity of some of the Red Book varieties. The real fun for many collectors lies with "cherry-picking". This quaint phrase, in numismatics, describes knowledgeable collectors who are able to examine a dealer's stock and pick out those coins whose scarcity is not known to the dealer. There is nothing unethical in this practice. Dealers know they are fair game for collectors who have taken the time to learn more than they about a particular series of coins. Large cent and colonial coin collectors have practiced cherry-picking for decades.

The ultimate in Bust Half collecting is represented by members of the Bust Half Nut Club. This group consists of collectors who are committed to assembling a collection of about 450 Bust Half dollars. Their collections consist not only of each date and each Red Book variety but each "die marriage" for each year from 1807 through 1836.

In 1967 Al C. Overton published the standard work on Bust Halves: Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794-1836. His treatise was updated by a 2nd edition in 1970 and is a must for every Bust Half nut. (Copies are available at most coin stores.) Mr. Overton did his best to describe and photograph every obverse and reverse die used by the U.S. Mint to strike half dollars from 1794 through 1836. The Bust Half Nut Club has published a supplement to Overton's work. The supplement describes 10 die marriages that were discovered after the 2nd edition.

To become a member of the Bust Half Nut Club one must already possess at least one hundred of the die marriages described by Overton and be recommended by a member of the Club. Club members are easily found at coin shows. They move quietly from table to table, Overton book in hand, looking for marriages they still need or improvers for pieces they already own.

Bust Half dollars are lovely remnants of early 19th Century numismatics. They were produced with lettered edges and from dies that bore the marks of the engraver. The dies were clashed, cracked and shattered. The resultant halves



offer collectors romance, history and beauty. One may select an economical and attainable goal of assembling a date set in low to medium grade. The more ambitious or affluent can seek examples in higher grades or tackle the Red Book or Overton varieties.

Sheridan Downey, III



Editor's note: Mr. Downey has suggested collecting bust halves in Fine condition with an average cost of about \$35. Most of the same coins in Very Fine condition could be bought for \$10 to \$15 more and the benefits to be gained are worth considering. You get coins with more detail, the coins are easier to attribute and, should you want to resell the coins, there is more demand for VF and above marriages.

The next issue of the John Reich Journal will have an article on Pricing and Grading Bust Halves.



### LETTERED EDGE DOLLARS 1794 - 1803

My interest in collecting has always been the lettered edge dollars of 1794-1803. One aid I devised to study this coinage is an organization by dies - obverse, reverse, and lettered edge. To each die I assign a unique identification number. My tentative organization for the obverse dies is presented on the following page. I use the prefix **OD** for obverse die followed by the last digit of the date, and finally the unique number for that die.

I do not assert that this mode of organization is final, nor necessarily advantageous, nor of interest to anyone else! It is simply an attempt to organize this coinage by the dies employed instead of by the Bolender numbers. It is yours to use if you wish - of course, critical comment is invited.

Robert M. Stark



# OBVERSE DIE USAGE

Year	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03
------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Main Design	Flowing Hair	-----Fillet Bust-----
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Obverse Stars	-----8X7-----	9X7	7X6	7X6	-----7X6-----
		10X6	8X7	8X5	

Overdates	99/98	02/01
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OD4-1	B1	OD8-10	B14	OD0-4	B5-B8
OD5-1	B1-B10-B16	11	B15	5	B10-B11
2	B2-B17-B19	12	B16	6	B13-B18
3	B3-B9 -B11	13	B17	7	B14
4	B4	14	B18-B20-B21	8	B15
5	B5	15	B19	9	B16
6	B6	16	B22-B23	10	B17
7	B7-B18-B20	17	B24	11	B19
8	B8	18	B25	12	B20
9	B12	19	B26	OD1-1	B1-B2-B3
10	B13	20	B27	2	B4
11	B14	21	B28-B30-B31-B33	3	B5
12	B15	22	B29	OD2-1	B1
OD6-1	B1	OD9-1	B1-B2-B3	2	B2
2	B2-B6	2	B4-B13-B15	3	B3
3	B3-B4	3	B5-B6-B7	4	B4
4	B5	4	B8-B12	5	B9
OD7-1	B1-B2	5	B9	6	B5
2	B3	6	B10-B11-B17	7	B6
OD8-1	B1	7	B12	8	B8
2	B2	8	B14-B22	OD3-1	B1
3	B3-B4-B5	9	B16	2	B2
4	B6-B7	10	B18-B19	3	B3
5	B8	11	B21	4	B4
6	B9	12	B23	5	B5
7	B10-B13	ODO-1	B1	6	B6
8	B11	2	B2-B3-B12	7	B7
9	B12	3	B4		

Summary	Flowing Hair	11
	Fillet Bust	72
Total Obverse Dies		83



## A CROSS REFERENCE - BREEN TO JR-NUMBERS

On several different occasions the authors of Early United States Dimes 1796-1837 debated about whether Breen variety numbers should be included with the new John Reich variety numbers. On every occasion the suggestion was defeated, as the authors felt the distribution of the unpublished Breen manuscript was too limited and it was only because of the Xerox machine that a few copies were in collectors' hands. This table was left out of the book in the hope that the JR-numbering system would be accepted for identifying dime varieties. But an article in the Journal should serve just as well for those who would like to see the numbers correlated.

The Dime Book authors would also like to inform all of our readers that the acronym "JR" is preferred in describing dime varieties in catalogs, newspapers and the like. Thus the large date 1828 dime would be listed as 1828 JR-2.

1796	1802	1811
Breen 5-D = JR-1	Breen 2-D = JR-1	Breen 1-A = JR- 1
4-C = JR-2	2-B = JR-2	
2-E = JR-3	2-C = JR-3	1814
2-B = JR-4	1-A = JR-4	Breen 1-A = JR- 1
3-B = JR-5		2-B = JR- 2
1-A = JR-6	1803	2-C = JR- 3
	Breen 1-A = JR-1	3-C = JR- 4
1797	1-B = JR-2	3-D = JR- 5
Breen 1-A = JR-1	1-C = JR-3	
2-A = JR-2	2-D = JR-4	1820
		Breen 1-A = JR- 1
1798	1804	4-E = JR- 2
Breen 1-A = JR-1	Breen 1-A = JR-1	4-D = JR- 3
1-B = JR-2	1-B = JR-2	1-D = JR- 4
2-C = JR-3		5-D = JR- 5
3-D = JR-4	1805	5-F = JR- 6
	Breen 1-A = JR-1	8-G = JR- 7
1800	1-B = JR-2	2-B = JR- 8
Breen 1-A = JR-1		2-C = JR- 9
1-B = JR-2	1807	3-C = JR-10
	Breen 1-A = JR-1	9-J = JR-11
1801		9-H = JR-12
Breen 1-A = JR-1	1809	7-H = JR-13
1-B = JR-2	Breen 1-A = JR-1	



1821  
Breen 1-A = JR- 1  
1-H = JR- 2  
8-A = JR- 3  
8-H = JR- 4  
3-C = JR- 5  
2-B = JR- 6  
4-D = JR- 7  
7-G = JR- 8  
5-E = JR- 9  
6-F = JR-10

1822  
Breen 1-B = JR-1

1823  
Breen 1-A = JR-1  
1-B = JR-2  
2-B = JR-3

1824  
Breen 1-A = JR-1  
1-B = JR-2

1825  
Breen 2-A = JR-1  
3-B = JR-2  
3-A = JR-3  
4-D = JR-4  
5-D = JR-5

1827  
Breen 1-A = JR- 1  
6-L = JR- 2  
6-F = JR- 3  
10-J = JR- 4  
2-J = JR- 5  
2-B = JR- 6  
3-G = JR- 7  
3-C = JR- 8  
8-C = JR- 9  
8-G = JR-10  
9-I = JR-11  
5-E = JR-12  
11-K = JR-13

1828  
Breen 2-B = JR-1  
1-A = JR-2

1829  
Breen 1-A = JR- 1  
1-B = JR- 2  
2-C = JR- 3  
3-D = JR- 4  
3-J = JR- 5  
3-E = JR- 6  
5-F = JR- 7  
6-F = JR- 8  
6-H = JR- 9  
7-K = JR-10  
5-I = JR-11  
6-G = JR-12

1830  
Breen 1-F = JR-1  
1-A = JR-2  
1-E = JR-3  
3-C = JR-4  
3-B = JR-5  
2-B = JR-6  
4-D = JR-7  
2-D = JR-8

1831  
Breen 2-C = JR-1  
3-A = JR-2  
3-D = JR-3  
1-F = JR-4  
1-A = JR-5  
1-B = JR-6

1832  
Breen 1-C = JR-1  
3-A = JR-2  
2-A = JR-3  
2-D = JR-4  
3-D = JR-5  
2-E = JR-6  
2-B = JR-7

1833  
Breen 3-D = JR- 1  
4-D = JR- 2  
3-F = JR- 3  
3-E = JR- 4  
1-A = JR- 5  
2-C = JR- 6  
1-B = JR- 7  
2-A = JR- 8  
2-B = JR- 9  
3-B = JR-10

1834  
Breen 1-A = JR-1  
1-G = JR-2  
1-F = JR-3  
2-B = JR-4  
2-C = JR-5  
4-C = JR-6  
5-E = JR-7

1835  
Breen 2-D = JR-1  
2-H = JR-2  
2-C = JR-3  
1-A = JR-4  
3-E = JR-5  
4-G = JR-6  
4-B = JR-7  
4-F = JR-8  
1-B = JR-9

1836  
Breen 3-C = JR-1  
1-A = JR-2  
2-B = JR-3

1837  
Breen 2-B = JR-1  
2-D = JR-2  
2-A = JR-3  
1-A = JR-4



## WEAK STRIKES ON CAPPED BUST HALF DOLLARS

The purpose of this article is to submit for discussion and comment a few ideas about the minting process for early bust halves. My intent is to put forward some thoughts on the various steps in the minting process and offer some possible explanations for the large number of pieces which were weakly struck. The discussion is limited to halves only as it is the area which I am most familiar with.

The introduction of the John Reich design to half dollars in 1807 was intended as an improvement over the Draped Bust design used from 1801. As is often the case with a new design, problems occurred almost immediately. One of the most troublesome was that the coins often showed a soft or weak strike. To be sure, many steps were taken to correct this situation. The alignment of the dies and their adjustment at the strike position was checked and re-checked many times. Still the weak strikes persisted and eventually caused the hubs to be re-worked in 1809, after only two years of use. These steps did relatively little to solve the problems as soft strikes were to plague the mint for several more years.

If we eliminate the dies as being responsible and look elsewhere for a cause, we may be able to uncover several potential culprits. Suppose the planchets were responsible. There is ample evidence that the diameter of the planchets varied significantly, which would bear a direct relationship to the thickness. Don Taxay, writing in the 1976 Scott's Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins, states that planchet diameters varied from 1.27 to 1.32 inches. The "Redbook" only gives an approximate diameter of 32.5 mm or 1.28 inches.

Given the elaborate bonding and security procedures practiced at the Mint, one can be reasonably certain that the composition was fairly consistent at .8924 silver and .1076 copper. Also, the weight was either adjusted down by a file, if necessary to meet the standard, or if the piece was underweight, it was usually re-melted. If we consider composition as correct, weight as correct, and diameter as varying, there should be some corresponding variance in the thickness of the planchet. This could very well account for



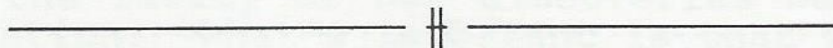
the varying sharpness in detail as a thick planchet would likely exhibit more detail than one of the thin flans.

Two additional factors that could have affected the diameter of the planchets would be the device used to cut out the blanks from the stock supplied by the rolling department and the rolling machines themselves. If all the "cookie cutters" were not the same, varying diameter planchets would result. If the rolled stock was not of even thickness, varying weight planchets would result. If, as I suspect, both of these factors were involved due to the extreme economic measures being practiced by the fledgling Mint in order to survive in a very hostile environment, havoc in the production process was the inevitable result. In fact, a good case could be made for the argument that the soft strike problem didn't end until the disastrous fire of January, 1816. In that fire, most of the rolling machinery and other planchet preparation equipment was badly damaged or destroyed.

My final possible culprit would be the castaing machine, which was used to "inflict" the security lettering to the edge of the planchet. If the machine's pressure was too great, it could conceivably raise too high an obverse and/or reverse rim which could interfere with the normal striking process and leave a weakly struck piece. Whether the diameter was severely affected by putting the blanks through the castaing machine will best be determined by others who have made a more thorough study of the process.

As was stated at the beginning of this article, my purpose is to provoke discussion and comment. If you have comments, criticisms, or corrections, please forward them so they can be shared by all with an interest in the (John Reich Collectors) Society and the series.

JRCS #17



At the 1985 ANS COAC, Elvira Clain-Stefanelli extended an invitation to John W. McCloskey and William L. Subjack to view the National Numismatic Collections. They went to Washington, D.C. in July of 1985. One of the coins they attributed was an impaired Proof-55 1827 JR-10 dime.



## AN 1820 HALF DOLLAR HOARD

For at least 30 years I have known about a hoard of 1820 half dollars. An old collector friend of mine heard years ago that 1820 was a low-mintage year, and that the half dollars struck that year would become valuable. He bought every nice one he saw, accumulating over 150 of them. He sold off the lower grades, only keeping the coins that were from about EF to gem BU and he has 119 left. For years I have wanted to attribute the coins, but the collector has no interest in varieties. In August 1985, he finally gave in to my pleas and here is what I found:

1820/19	O-101	12
1820/19	O-102	27
1820	O-103	22
1820	O-104	2
1820	O-105	19
1820	O-106	15
1820	O-107	3
1820	O-108	19

I noted in the gem category one O-101, two O-102's, two O-105's, three O-106's and, believe it or not, one O-107.

Comparing the number of each variety with Overton's rarity ratings, the only real disagreement seems to be O-103. Overton rated variety 103 as an R-3. I am sure my friend did not look for any varieties, although he might have leaned a little toward the overdates, because he did like them.

My friend is not interested in selling any of the halves.

Jules Reiver

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(Editor's note: A very impressive holding, almost six rolls of 1820 halves. Even a long time Bust Half nut would drool over such an opportunity. Maybe this is part of the reason why high grade 1820's seem to be elusive! I, for one, would liked to see a breakdown by grade, i.e. EF, AU, and BU.)



## A SECOND 1830 V-13 HALF DIME

Most of us who collect early U.S. coins by die variety are acutely aware that undiscovered marriages not only exist but also may be discovered by finding an unknown die state of a known die. Such was the case with the 1830 V-13 half dime discovered by a Michigan collector in March 1983. It is a muling of the V-9 obverse and the V-3 reverse. But it has a full cud from stars 5 and 6 to the rim! So big and obvious is the cud that the discoverer and the owner (Editor's note - two different people) never bothered to mention any of the other die defects on the coin.

Consequently, for the past two years a lot of die variety collectors have been looking for an 1830 half dime with a huge cud between stars 5 and 6. However, known only to the owner, there are two additional almost "insignificant" die cracks on this obverse: one small crack extends from star 12 upwards toward star 11 and to the rim; the other extends from the back of Miss Liberty's cap above star to the rim. Both die cracks are small and rather insignificant when compared to the cud, but very important when trying to cherry pick another example.

The new specimen shows only the faintest die crack from star 5 to the rim. In fact, it is of the same magnitude as the 2nd and 3rd cracks previously described. So what does the second example tell us? A) A full cud may develop in a very short period of time B) Small die cracks may be quite stable. Until more is known about the metallurgy and the practices of the early Mint, we are unable to predict the rarity of new discoveries based on die deterioration. What's important is that we describe a new variety by noting all of its diagnostic features as well as all die defects.

R. J. Logan



# J.R.C.S. AUCTION No. 1

One of our charter members was looking thru an old shoe box the other day when he discovered a few abandoned half dimes and dimes that needed a new home... He has donated the coins to the John Reich Collectors Society and all proceeds from this sale will be used for promoting the organization and to help pay for publication of the Journal. The coins all grade BA (barely attributable) and command a minimum \$2.00 opening bid. All bear the provenance of being part of the first JRCS auction.

LOT	DENOM./YEAR/VAR.	RARITY	CONDITION
1	1/2 Dime 1833 V-4b	R-2	VG-8 (Pitted)
2	1/2 Dime 1837 V-3	R-2	VG-8 (Damage)
3	Dime 30/29 JR-5	R-5	VG-10
4	Dime 1834 JR-2	R-2	VG-10 (Damage)
5	Dime 1834 JR-5	R-1	VG-8
6	Dime 1835 JR-3	R-2	VG-8
7	Dime 1836 JR-1	R-3	G-6
8	Dime 1837 JR-1	R-4	G-6

Please, JRCS members only and mail your bids prior to March 1, 1986 to: JRCS Auction #1, P.O. Box 205, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. Bid in odd amounts and eliminate embarrassing ties! There will be no returns.

The Management

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Since the Dime Book came out new finest knowns are being reported.

A New Jersey collector reports an 1830/29 JR-5, ANACS graded MS-63/65.

From New York: 1820 JR-5 MS-63, (Offered for sale by Heritage Rare Coin Galleries, 1/14/85); 1820 JR-12 MS-60 (Lot 148 Stack's Allen Sale 2/4/77); 1834 JR-4 MS-60 (Sold by Stack's, 1/4/85).



# **1986 COINAGE OF THE AMERICAS CONFERENCE**

The American Numismatic Society

November 1-2, 1986

## **AMERICA'S SILVER COINAGE 1794-1891**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The 1986 Coinage of the Americas Conference will explore the development of federal silver coinage from the organization of the United States Mint to the end of the Liberty Seated series in 1891. The emphasis will be on new or ongoing research, and individual presentations will be scheduled for approximately twenty-five minutes. A question and answer period will follow each talk. Those who have already indicated an interest in participating include John W. McCloskey, Julius Reiver, David Cohen, Harry X Boosel, Ivan Leaman and Donald Gunnet. As in previous years, the Society plans to publish the papers presented.

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Those interested in participating as speakers should contact Richard Doty at the American Numismatic Society and send him an abstract of their proposed topic. The Conference's Steering Committee will meet in mid-July 1986 to make the final speaker selection.

### **CALL FOR EXHIBITS**

While the museum will be exhibiting material from its own collection, we are also looking for exhibits from other sources. Those interested in this aspect of COAC '86 are requested to contact Richard Doty to establish space allotments, security arrangements, etc.

The American Numismatic Society  
Broadway at 155th Street  
New York NY 10032  
(212) 234-3130



